BACCHANALIA:
OR A
DESCRIPTION
OF A
Drunken Club.

A POEM.

Silenum pueri ſomno vidêre jacentem. Virgil.

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THE DESCRIPTION OF A Drunken Club.

I.

IT was my hap Spectator once to be,
As I unseen, in secret Angle, sate,
Of that unmanly Crowd,
Who, with Wits low, and Voices loud,
Were met to Celebrate,
In Evening late,
The *Bacchanalian* Solemnity.
If what I then
Or heard, or saw, I here relate agen,
Accuse me not of Incivility,
In blabbing privacy;
Since all men know, that in those Mysteries,
(Quite different from other Deities)
No man obliged is to secresie.
Yea, if I should Conceal,
'Twould be in vain:
That pervious Tribe would their own Acts reveal,
Since Wine (transparent thing!) no secret can retain.

II.

The Actors in this Scene were not of one
Age, Humour, Figure, or Condition.
See One with hollow Cheeks, meagre, and lean,
By Sipping-Hectick, e'ne consumed quite,
As he a Skeleton had been,
Enough to put Deaths self into a fright:

Only in this he ſeem'd to differ from the Dead,
He lifted oft his Hand up to his Head,
Another ſwoln up with Hydropick fat,
Out-ſtrutting Eyes, and Paunch that ſo o're grows,
He might vie Bellies with the very Butt,
From whence the precious Liquor flows.
One comes with Crimſon face,
More red than *Eryſipelas*;
Another pale, through Vital heat ſtruck dead,
By greater heat of Wine, extinguiſhed.
Yet is the Caſe of both, much what the ſame,
Nature, in One, is on a flame,
And, in the Other, all in Aſhes laid.
One young as *Hebe*, ſmooth as *Ganimede*,
Another old *Silenus* ſeems to be,
With trembling-Hand, and palſie-Head,
And lame on Feet, with Gowty Malady;
One Grave, and Saturnine,
Another jolly, brisk, and fine,
He ſeem'd not much unlike the luſty God of Wine.

III.

One Noble was, yclep'd a Lord, I wis,
Another did a meaner Title take,
A Tinker hight: but all's one, that, or this,
Lycean-Laws no difference do make.
Cups reconcile Degrees, and Natures too;
He Nobleſt is, who can in Drink out-do.
No boaſt of Blood will here allowed be,
But what from tender Grape is preſt.
No need of Heraulds, or their Blazonry;
He bears beſt Coat, who bears his Liquor beſt.
(Such Paſſive Valour is in moſt Requeſt)
No talk of Race, or Pedigree;
For Honour here is a meer ſudden thing:
The Garland hops from Brow to Brow,
As more, or leſs, the moiſt Atchievements grow,
Who yeſterday was Puny, now is Crown'd a King.

IV.

But ſee! the Battel comes.
Sound Trumpets, now, and Drums!
Two Armies rank'd, and facing, I eſpy'd;
Whom nothing, but one long Plain, did divide,

The

The Table call'd. Well choſen ground, for both,
So plain, and ſmooth,
It gave no vantage unto either Side.
Signal once giv'n, the Bullets fly
From ſide to ſide, ſo furiouſly,
That, in ſhort time, none ſcap'd without a Wound,
Yea bloody Wound: only, 'twixt this,
And common Wounds, ſome difference is,
That thoſe do let blood out, but theſe infund.
One thing indeed I mus'd to ſee,
Each Souldier, to his own mouth, lift his paw,
Before he aim'd at face of Enemy.
What? ſure, quoth I, theſe do their Bullets chaw,
Before they Fight. Or, is it *Dutch*-mans Law,
Who, 'ere his Valour in Sea-Fight appear,
Firſt takes a Doſe of his own Gunpowder?
And now the Battel's hot. Each Champion grows
(Like chafed Lion) more enrag'd by blows.
For Wounds do valour but augment.
Wounds broach their Fury, and give Rage a Vent.
Nothing will now their keen Revenge content,
Until they ſee their Foes
Lie proſtrate at their Feet, ſenſeleſs, and dead:
And hence their blows
Are level'd all againſt the Soul's chief Seat, the Head.

V.

And, by this time, me-thought, I ſaw
Dame *Reaſon* trembling ſtand upon
The top of her *Conarion*,
Dreading a Deluge from the Floods below.
As Mortals in *Deucalion*'s Flood, on cliff
Of *Caucaſus*, or *Tenariff*,
On Aiery *Alps*, or *Apennine*,
Prolong'd that Fate, which they could not decline.
But what ſhe fear'd is come.
See! the Waves riſe, and Billows foam;
And waſhing firſt her Foot, and Shin,
Then Waſt, and Shoulders, Neck, and Chin,
At laſt quite ſtop her mouth, ſurround her piercing Eye,
Yea ſwallow Head and Brain,
Till nought of her doth viſible remain,
No not the very Hair,
Which ſtands upright,
Through diſmal fright,
But all, by ſwelling Surge, ſurmounted are.

VI.

And now a new Scene comes. The Cenſor's gone,
All things in medley, and confuſion, run.
Words now, like Thieves in *Interregnums*, break
Their Priſons. All men hear, and all men ſpeak:
Yet none another underſtands, nor yet
Himſelf a whit.
And, could ſome nimble-handed Scribe have writ
All that was ſaid; *Babel* had been retriev'd,
And all her Tongues Reviv'd.
Yea more confus'd theſe Tongues, than *Babel*'s, were:
They talkt of Towers on Earth, but theſe in Air.

VII.

One is All Manhood; talks of nothing elſe,
But Swords, and Guns, and Forts, and Cittadels;
Sieges, and Fights by Sea and Land,
And with a Gravity Cenſorian,
'Twixt generous ſcorn, and pity; doth condemn
What the World calls Exploit, or Stratagem.
Alas! your *Dutch*-Fights, or *Blakes Tunis* Knacks,
What were they all, but Squibs and Cracks?
Throw Eighty Eight in,
'Twas but a meer Bear-baiting.
Cales Fight was but a Flutter,
And Great *Lepanto*, fam'd of yore,
To a true Sea-Fight, was no more,
(Although Hiſtorique Coxcombs make a Splutter)
Than ſhooting Ducks in Pond, or ſtabbing of an Otter.

VIII.

Some talk of *Bajazet*'s great Battel;
'Twas more a Tumult, than a Fight
I would more Execution with one
Well-Marſhal'd, reſolute Troop, have done,
Than *Tamerlane*'s long drove of *Motley* Cattel.
And *Cannæ* Field (to ſpeak the right)
Was meerly loſt for want
Of Courage both, and Management.

O, how

O, how I would have knockt, had I been there,
And kickt, and cuff'd, that Punick Cur,
As long as He could ſtir!
I would have giv'n him Beef to's Vineger.
The Stripling *Macedonian*,
What was he to a Man,
Although his Legends make a mighty pother?
And thoſe two *Roman* Boys,
Who in *Pharſalian* Fray did make ſuch noiſe
(As *Lucan* prates) they did but ſpit at one another.

IX.

The World did ne're yet know
What Reſolution, join'd with Art, could do.
Could I but find
A pack of Heroes to my mind,
And of as clear
A Valour, as my ſelf; I'd not diſpair
To rid poor *Chriſtendom* of all its fear.
I'd ſeize the *Turk* in his own *Dardanells*,
That all the Spells
Of Magick Art, ſhould never ſet him free.
Then wafting o're the *Euxine* Sea,
To *Cham* of *Tartary*,
I'd make his *Cham*-ſhip, and his flat-fac'd men
For eating raw Horſe-legs agen.
The *Perſian* King
I'd take, and in his Carpets roll
Him up, like his own Silk-Worms; and ſo bring
Him quite away under my Arm. *Mogoll*
I'd make to ſtoop. Or, if he durſt advance
His ſturdy Lance,
I'd hamſtring him, and all his Elephants.
So paſſing on
To *China*, and *Japan*,
To *Africk* ſhore, and to *American*,
I'd Conquer th' Univerſe, in far leſs bound
Of time, than lazy *Drake*, or *Magellan*, could ſail it round.

X.

Another, he is all State-Policy;
Eſteeming then Himſelf moſt wiſe
In Myſteries
Of Government, when he
Has loſt the Hegemonique Faculty.
As if his Wine-ſoakt Brains
Like Rivers were,
Which ever deepeſt are,
In times of greateſt Flouds, and Rains.
Or, as on watry Brook,
In Moon-ſhine Night, we look,
And ſee the Stars, how in their Orbs they move:
So, while with Wine
His liquid Brains do ſhine,
He ſees the motions of the Powers above.
Europe, quoth he,
Is meerly loſt, I ſee,
For lack of good Intelligence.
And underſtanding of Intrigues,
The Crafts of Treaties, and of Leagues,
This Spoils all States, and ruins Governments.
But, were I once in Secretaries Place,
I'd quickly bring things to a better paſs.
Alas! *Colbert*'s an Aſſe,
I'd Fox him with his own *French* Wine;
Then gage his Brains, and ſo the bottom find,
Extent, and Compaſs, of the *French* Deſign.
The Jeſuits themſelves I'd undermine;
Out-do th' *Ignatian* Creeples in their Play,
I'd halt e're I was Lame, as well, and better far, than they.

XI.

Are theſe the Popes Grand Tools?
Worſhipful Noddies! who, but blundring Fools,
Would ever have forgot,
To burn thoſe Letters, that Reveal'd their Plot?
Or, in an Ale-houſe, told, that *Godfrey*'s dead,
Three days before he was diſcovered;
Leaving the Silly World, to call to mind
That Common Logick, They, that hide, can find?

But

But ſee their Maſter-policy
On *Primroſe-Hill!*
Where their Grand Enemy,
Like *Saul* upon Mount-*Gilboa*, doth lie,
Faln on his Sword, as he himſelf did kill.
But O the Infelicity!
That blood was freſh, and guſht out of the Wound,
This ſo congeal'd that not one Spot was found;
No, not upon his Sword; as if it wou'd
Tell us, 'twas guiltleſs of its Maſter's blood.
Some Carkaſſes, by bleeding, do declare;
This by not bleeding, ſhew'd the Murderer.
But, to his broken-Neck, I pray,
What can our Politicians ſay?
He hang'd, then ſtab'd Himſelf, for a ſure way?
Or, firſt he ſtab'd himſelf, then wrung about
His Head, for madneſs, that adviſ'd him to't?
Well, *Primroſe*, may our *Godfrey*'s Name, on thee
(Like *Hyacinth*) inſcribed be.
On Thee his Memory flouriſh ſtill,
(Sweet, as thy Flower, and laſting, as thy Hill)
Whilſt bluſhing *Somerſet*, to her
Eternal ſhame, ſhall this Inſcription wear,
The Devil's an Aſſe: for, Jeſuits, on this Spot,
Broke both the Neck of *Godfrey*, and their Plot:
Thus ſpake this Sage: whilſt I, from thence,
Infer'd, amidſt heaps of Impertinence, (ſenſe.
Fools ſometimes chop on Truth, and Drunkards ſtumble upon

XII.

Another's all Art, and Philoſophy.
Encyclopædia, with it's mighty ſound,
What is't, quoth he, but when the Brain turns round?
Of which verſatile Ingeny
No man, I'm ſure, is Maſter, more than I.
Tongues are my Element. I declare,
I'll talk with any man on Earth,
And yet a dearth
Of words will never fear.
The fertile Cups beſt *Dictionaries* are.
And as for *Rherotick*, that two-handed Art,
Which Play's both Plaintiff's, and Defendants part;
To me 'tis Natural: for, ev'n now, what e're,
Me-thinks, I look on, double doth appear.
Logick's a Toy. Alas!
I'll prove by Syllogiſms, a man's an Aſſe,

Yet never ſtir out of this Room,
(Moſt Reverend Friends) to find a *Medium*.
Arithmetick, and *Algebraick* Arts,
What are they to a man of parts?
A member, he
Unworthy ſure muſt be,
Of ſuch a Learned Club as this,
Who underſtands not, what a Reckoning is.
Aſtronomy's a Science which I know
So throughly, that my Head ev'n now,
I feel, is in the Clouds; and with each Star
I'm ſo familiar
Without a *Jacobs*-Staff, I know not how to go.

XIII.

Philoſophy both new, and old, I know.
The ſeven wiſe Men, of whom the *Grecians* tell us,
Were but a Club of honeſt Fellows,
That ſate, and drank, and talkt, as we do now;
until the Reckoning was come,
Then every man threw in his Symbolum.
Yea Sects of old had their Origination
But from the Liquor's various Operation.
Some, when inſpired by the Barrel,
Grew Sceptical, or apt to quarrel:
Others, enclin'd to the Dogmatique way,
Are wondrous Poſitive in all they ſay.
'Twas the ſame *Sherry*,
That made *Democritus* ſo merry,
And weeping *Heraclite* ſo ſorry:
For he (as moſt ſuppoſe)
Was Maudlin, when he ſnivel'd ſo at Noſe.
Some would be ſo dead drunk, that, pinch them n'ere
So hard, they never felt: theſe Stoicks were.
Others were ſenſible a little
And this was call'd the *Peripatetique* Whittle,
Others, of *Epicurus* mad-cap ſtrain,
No pleaſure knew like Drunk, and drunk again.
Yea ev'n grave *Plato*'s Academick Tribe
No ſcruple made to bibb,
Until Idea's crawled in their Brain.
As for *Mechanick* Virtuoſo's skill,
That founds all Knowledge in Experiments,
(Although indeed I know what 'tis, full well,
To make Mans Reaſon truckle to his ſenſe)

Yet I have found a more Compendious way,
For whilſt, in queſt of Nature, they
By tedious ſearches clear the Object; I
Do all, by ſtrengthening the Faculty.
With brisk *Falernum*, clear the dim-ey'd Soul;
This was, I'm ſure, the old *Philoſophy*,
They ever ſought, for Truth, i'th' bottom of the Bowl.

XIV.

But the moſt frequent Humor's ſtill behind;
Which is, to talk of Grave Divinity.
Of which, the proper Reaſon to aſſign,
I find it not an eaſie Task to be.
Whether from that near Conſanguinity,
And natural Love
'Twixt *Bacchus* and great Jove;
Whoſe Son he was, and hatch'd up, in his Thigh,
In place we commonly do call, *Popes-Eye*;
An Omen that, in time, he'd prove
A great Dictator in *Theology*?
Or, that the Grape ſo ſweet,
That *Nectar* of the Gods, do's men inſpire
With Sacred Fire.
And raiſe their thoughts to more than Humane height?
Or that the Intellect doth gaſping lie,
And thence, to utter doth deſire,
Some few grave Sentences, before ſhe die?

XV.

To give you an Account of my Belief,
Quoth one deep Sage, who thought himſelf a Chief,
I'm no *Mahometan*:
But utterly defie the *Alcoran*;
Whoſe Curſed Laws forbid the uſe of Wine.
Nor ſhall the *Jews* Religion be mine,
Which ſo abhors that harmleſs Beaſt, the Swine.
The Pope I do Pronounce to be
Stark *Antichriſtian*
Which prove by forty Arguments I can.
But only, name this One, I ſhall,
So ſtrong, it well may ſerve for all,
He takes the Cup from honeſt Layity.
Baſe dirty Clown!
I wonder in what Town,
Unleſs it were *Hogs-Norton*, he was bred.

To drink to men,
And preſently forbid,
On pain of Death, they muſt not pledge agen.
Were He un-erring; as He dos pretend,
His Wit would Him have better Manners taught:
But Wit, and Manners both, I ſee, are naught.
And ſhall I then believe
What ſuch a Slovenly Religion ſaith,
And pin my Faith
Upon a Snotty Sleeve?
No, no; if e're my Reaſon I reſign,
It ſhall be only to a Glaſs of Wine.
Thus did this *Heroe* vent,
'Gainſt Triple-Crown, his diſcontent;
Throughout which whole Diſcourſe, thought I,
An Argument cloſe coucht doth lie,
'Gainſt *Rome*'s Infallibility,
Stronger then what hath yet expreſſed been:
For Standers by are apt to think,
That Popes, ſometimes, may be in Drink,
And then, as rambling, talk, as other men.

XVI.

But he proceeds. I could rehearſe ye
The State, quoth he, of Modern Controverſie.
What Weapons keen are us'd in that ſharp Sport,
Betwixt *Arminius*, and *Dort*.
How thoſe twit Theſe, with turning men
To Stocks, and Stones; and how agen
The Abſolute Divine
Whips Cinq with Thirty Nine;
Not much unlike the *Jewiſh* ſcourging Diſcipline.
I could the *Gordian* knot unty
Of *Eccleſiaſtick* Polity;
And tell the Street, and Sign,
Where that Great Lady dwells, call'd *Jus-Divine*,
Who Courted long by all has been,
But ſtill ſo Coy, She's ſcarcely to be ſeen.
I could Diſcourſe of Ceremonial Jarr,
(That leaſt, yet greateſt War)
Whoſe Hot Spurs, on each ſide, engage ſo far
Beyond their ſlow-pac'd Squadrons, that oft they,
By meer purſuing, loſe the Day.
Some would confine Religion's Dreſs
To the Courſe Freeze of meer Neceſſity:
Others attire Her all in Lace,
Preferring ſtill the greateſt Bravery.

Some make Her all Embroidery, and Seaming;
Some let Her ravel out, for lack of Hemming.
Some are reſolv'd to ſcruple whatſoe're
Is by Authority enjoin'd:
Whilſt ſome again, to croſs the others mind,
Wiſh all things were Enjoin'd, that ſcrupled are.
But how much better would it be,
Would but you Bigots of each ſide, quoth he,
Come hither, to obſerve Our prudent Faſhion,
And imitate Our ſignal Moderation!
For We, in theſe
Solemnities,
Do neither ſcruple, nor preſs Modes upon ye;
Drink either with, or without Ceremonye.
Each man enjoy's his Liberty, provided
He takes his Cup,
And drinks all up,
All other Doubts, and Circumſtances are decided.

XVII.

But by this time Tongues 'gan to reſt;
The Talking Game was at the beſt.
A ſleepy Scene beginneth to appear.
Bright Reaſon's ray,
By damp of Wine, within this Hemiſphere,
Was quench'd before: and now dim ſenſe, to ſtay,
Muſt not expect, long after Her.
So when, Nights faireſt Lanthorn, *Cynthia* bright
Is ſet; each little miſt, or thin-ſpread Cloud
Sufficient is to ſhroud
The pink-ey'd Stars, and make a pitchy Night.
Old *Morpheus* comes, with Leaden Key,
His drowſie Office to perform:
Though ſome there are, that do affirm,
'Twas *Bacchus* did it; and that He
Had Legal Right, to lock up each mans Brain:
Since every Room
His own Goods did contain,
And was his proper Wine-Cellar become.

XVIII.

Some down into their Seats do ſhrink,
As ſnuffs in Sockets ſink;
Some throw themſelves upon the Bed,
Some at Feet, and ſome at Head,

Some Croſs, ſome Slope-wiſe, as they can;
Like Hogs in ſtraw, or Herrings in a pan.
Some on the Floor do make their humble Bed,
(Proper effect of Wine!)
So over-laden Vine,
Prop failing, bowes its bunchy Head,
To kiſs the Ground, from whence 'twas nouriſhed.
One, ſtouter than the reſt, maintain'd the Field,
And ſcorn'd to yield.
A *Roman* Emperour, ſtanding, vow'd to die;
And ſo, quoth he, will I;
Till nodding, as he ſtood, the Churliſh Wall
Repuls'd his Head, and made him, reeling fall;
So, with a jot.
Embrac'd the common lot,
The laſt, but yet the greateſt, Trophy, of them all.

XIX.

So ſlept they ſound; but whilſt they ſlept,
Nature, which all this while, had kept
Her laſt reſerve of ſtrength,
In Stomachs mouth, where, *Helmont* ſaith,
The Soul its chiefeſt Manſion hath,
Began at length
To kick, and friſk, and ſtoutly ſtrove
To throw the Liquid Rider off.
For now Her Caſe, like Mariners, was grown,
In leaky Ship, She muſt or pump, or drown.
Or whether that the Wine, which, till this time,
Was wont to dwell in Cellar's cooler Clime,
Now put in Stomachs boiling-Pot,
Found its new Habitation too hot?
What e're it was, the Floods guſht out
From ev'ry ſpout,
With ſuch a force; they made a fulſome fray.
One, who athwart his Neighbour lay,
Did right into his Pocket diſembogue;
For which the other would have call'd him Rogue,
But that his foreſtall'd mouth (brawls to prevent)
Repleniſht was with the ſame Element.
I'th' next mans face Another ſpues,
Who doth, with nimble Repartee, retort
His own, and his Aſſailants juice,
And ſo returns him double for't.
One with a Horizontal mouth,
Diſcharges up into the Air,

Which

Which falls again in Perpendicular:
Much like thoſe Clouds, in Sea, that's South,
Which, in a Lump, deſcend, and quite
O're-whelm the Ship, on which they chance to light:
The Floor with ſuch a Deluge was o'reflown,
As would infallibly have ran
Quite through, and to it's native Cellar gone,
As Rivers Circulate to th' Ocean:
Had it not been incraſſate with a ſcum,
Which did, for Company, from Stomach come.
Nor was this all. The ſurly Element,
With Orall Channels not content,
Reverberates; and downward finds a Vent.
Which my Nice Muſe to tell forbears,
And begs, for what is paſt, the pardon of your Ears.

XX.

At length the Storm blows o're; the Sky grows clear,
Clouds are diſpel'd, and foggs, and fumes,
And Madam *Dianoia* now reſumes
Her Throne; when nimble Drawer mounts the ſtair,
And gueſſing, by this time, theſe *Heroes* were
In Reckoning-caſe; produceth, *ſans* delay,
A Bill more ſwel'd, and more inflam'd, than they.
Gigantick Items! yet evicted
Nothing could be, nor contradicted,
By any of the Company:
Becauſe 'twas all beyond Man's Memory.
Since then Objection was fruitleſs,
Solution muſt be the buſineſs.
All pockets (but ev'n now well lin'd) were ſwept,
Not one Croſs, for a Neaſt-egg, kept.
Tokens, and ſingle pence, muſt go,
Jacobuſſes, and Medals too;
And all too little to diſcharge the ſcore,
But forc't to ſign a Bill for as much more.
And thus the Poets Fiction came to paſs,
That *Bacchus* Conquered the golden *India's*

XXI.

All done, and now juſt ready to depart,
I, from my cloſe receſs, out ſtart.
And cry'd, Hold Gallants! I perceive,
The Play is done; yet give a Stranger leave,
Before the Company up break,
In a few words, the *Epilogue* to ſpeak.

Epilogue.

Now theſe mad *Hurricanes* are over-blown,
In cooler thoughts, Conſidet what y' h' done.
Think, each of you this day has kil'd a Man,
Stabbing, with Murd'rous Hand,
That noble Reaſon, by which Mortals are
Moſt like their Maker, and do bear
Their Great Creator's Superſcription.

Think of your ruin'd Health. See! your own Blood
Flies in your guilty Face: as if ſhe wou'd
Now tell you, to your Head, 'Tis you alone,
But whom ſhe's ſcorch't, diſordred, and undone.

Think of thoſe Hours conſum'd in ſordid Vice,
Thoſe Golden Sands, that run in vain,
(Luſts Meaſure made and Sacrifice)
Thoſe winged Hours, that n'ere return again.

Think of that abuſed Wealth,
Due to your Families, or the Poor;
Think how you ſwallow, in each Drunken Health,
The Widows Tears, and ſtarved Orphans Goar,

Think of your Bankrupt Reputation;
Each Ear abhors your more than brutiſh Name;
More dirty than the dirt you tread upon.
Your very Vomit ſtinks not, like your Fame.

Think, laſtly, on the Worlds great Doom,
When guilty Souls muſt to an Audit come.
A far more heavy Reckoning, then e're
You met with here.
More true by far, and yet far more ſevere.

Think on All this: and think on't ſoberly,
And then, perhaps you'l ſay, as well as I,
Your Mirth is Madneſs: Wine is Poiſon ſell:
Your Paradiſe is *Bedlam*; if not Hell.

FINIS.

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